

The rejected Claims 1 through 7, 15, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of the Applicant's Admitted Prior Art as set forth in the specification. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 defines the invention as a method for manufacturing a vehicle frame component that includes the steps of providing a workpiece, performing a scanning heat treatment process on the workpiece in a continuous and longitudinal manner from one end to the other, and deforming the workpiece to form a vehicle frame component. The unique aspect of this invention is that the heat treatment process is performed on the workpiece in a continuous and longitudinal manner. This is contrasted with the prior art method, wherein the heat treatment process is performed in an essentially static condition relative to the workpiece. In other words, although it is known to perform a heat treatment process, such as a retrogression heat treatment process, on a closed channel structural member, either in whole or in part, it is not known to perform such a heat treatment process in a continuous and longitudinal manner, such as shown in the drawings and discussed in the specification.

The Examiner takes official notice "that the concept of heat treating a workpiece with a device, in this case an inductive heating coil and a quenching ring, either in a stationary manner or in a continuous manner relative to the workpiece is notoriously old and well known throughout the art ..." (emphasis added). Respectfully, it is submitted that emphasized portion of this statement is wholly unsupported in the record. Neither the specification nor any source of prior art has been cited by the Examiner in support of this conclusion of obviousness. The Examiner is respectfully requested to identify any teaching in any prior art in support of this position. Absent any such teaching, the rejection must be withdrawn.

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In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early Notice Of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard S. MacMillan", written over a horizontal line.

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